



UMBRELLA-SEDGES

Cyperus spp.

There are approximately 600 species distributed throughout the temperate and tropical regions in the world. Approximately 90 species are found in the United States 41 of which are listed in Gray's Manual. Many of these are common to wet soils.

The stems of these annual or perennial sedges are usually triangular and unbranched; leafy at the base and with one or more leaves at the top. The flowers are located at the end of the top stem and may assume many forms in the various species. In general, the flower spikes arise from one point and radiate outwards in all directions (umbrella-like). The spikelets are usually flat or sometimes partially rounded; flowers develop in late summer or autumn.

Classification has been omitted since it involves a detailed technical analysis and often times is only possible with fully mature specimens. Several species are presented here as an indication of the general characteristics of these plants.

The tubers and seeds of *Cyperus* are eaten by waterfowl, game and song birds, and to a limited extent may be eaten by squirrel, muskrat, beaver and deer.

